

Chapter 1

THEME: Adonijah's abortive coup; Solomon anointed king

The Books of Kings continue the narrative that was begun in the Books of Samuel. In this first chapter David is a senile old man. One of his sons, Adonijah, attempts to seize the throne. David, aroused by Nathan and Bathsheba, orders another son, Solomon, anointed as king of Israel. This is a tremendous chapter that opens 1 Kings.

David's Declining Strength And Adonijah's Plot (1:1-10)

We begin on a sad note.

Now king David was old and stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat [[1Kings 1:1](#)].

David is now an old man. It is difficult to conceive of him as an old man. We always think of David as a shepherd boy. It is hard to picture him as an old, senile man who needs nursing care.

His son Adonijah takes advantage of him in this condition. He attempts to put himself on the throne and make himself king. Of course, that is not going to fit in with God's plan. A great deal of intrigue goes on -- intrigue is one of the things that characterize the reign of David.

Let us find out who Adonijah is. First Kings is the first time that he is mentioned in any prominent connection.

Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king; and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.

And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also was a very goodly man; and his mother bare him after Absalom [[1Kings 1:5-6](#)].

Adonijah was David's fourth son, born to him in Hebron ([2Sam. 3:4](#)). His mother was Haggith, one of David's wives, of whom we know nothing except that her name means "festive."

"Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself." That word exalted is interesting because there is a verse of Scripture that you can put right down over it: "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" ([Luke 14:11](#)). "He that exalteth himself shall be abased" is going to be true of Adonijah. He certainly exalted himself.

The Scriptures tell us many things about Adonijah. He was a very proud young man with a high regard for himself. He was conceited, and you can detect in him some of the traits of his half brother Absalom who had led a rebellion against David. Adonijah, had something not been done, would also have led a rebellion against his father. David never had a reputation of disciplining his family. He had a disorganized family life; organized chaos reigned in David's palace, and Adonijah took full advantage of the situation. David

Go and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign? [[1Kings 1:13](#)].

David had made a promise to Bathsheba. When their second son was born (their first son had died), David promised her that he would be the next king. That son is Solomon. Now David was making no move to put him on the throne. I do not think David was enthusiastic about making him the king.

Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy words [[1Kings 1:14](#)].

Nathan is saying, "We had better alert David to what is taking place. You tell David what is happening, and I will enforce your words." Nathan wanted to wake up this senile king to what was going on right under his nose.

And Bath-sheba went in unto the king into the chamber: and the king was very old; and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king.

And Bath-sheba bowed, and did obeisance unto the king. And the king said, What wouldest thou? [[1Kings 1:15-16](#)].

It seems as though David had not seen Bathsheba for a long time.

And she said unto him, My lord, thou swarest by the LORD thy God unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne.

And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, thou knowest it not:

And he hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host: but Solomon thy servant hath he not called.

And thou, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel are upon thee, that thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him [[1Kings 1:17-20](#)].

David had made no move to pick a successor from his several sons. Probably Adonijah was a very attractive, handsome, capable boy, and there were many people who wanted him for their next king.

Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders.

And, lo, while she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in.

And they told the king, saying, Behold Nathan the prophet. And when he was come in before the king, he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground.

And Nathan said, My lord, O king, hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? [[1Kings 1:21-24](#)].

Nathan and Bathsheba wanted to know if David had chosen Adonijah to reign after him. David, of course, knew nothing about it.

Then king David answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king.

And the king sware, and said, As the LORD liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress,

Even as I sware unto thee by the LORD God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day [[1Kings 1:28-30](#)].

When David spoke to Bathsheba about Solomon, notice that he said, "your son," and not "our son." David was not too enthusiastic about this boy. I don't think they had too much in common, as we shall soon see.

Then Bath-sheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let my lord king David live for ever.

And king David said, Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king.

The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon [[1Kings 1:31-33](#)].

The mule was the animal kings rode upon, while the horse was the animal of warfare. You will find in the Book of Revelation that the riding of the four horses speaks of turmoil and warfare. Also the Lord Jesus Christ will come again to this earth riding on a white horse, which speaks of warfare. He will come to put down rebellion on the earth; and before Him every knee shall bow. When the Lord came to earth the first time, He did not come to make war; He came to offer Himself as Israel's Messiah, and as such He rode a little donkey into Jerusalem. That is the animal upon which kings ride. Now David's own royal mount, a mule, is to be brought out, and Solomon is to be put upon it.

Solomon Is Anointed As King (1:38-53)

So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon.

And Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save king Solomon [[1Kings 1:38-39](#)].

Now there is no question as to whom David has chosen to be his successor. Solomon is to be the next king.

And all the people came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them.

And Adonijah and all the guests that were with him heard it as they had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, Wherefore is this noise of the city being in an uproar? [[1Kings 1:40-41](#)].

The messenger who brought the details to Adonijah concluded with this:

And moreover the king's servants came to bless our lord king David, saying, God make the name of Solomon better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne. And the king bowed himself upon the bed.

And also thus said the king, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which hath given one to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing it [[1Kings 1:47-48](#)].

David put his seal of approval upon Solomon as king. David was an old man, and soon he would sleep with his fathers.

And all the guests that were with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man his way.

And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar [[1Kings 1:49-50](#)].

Adonijah's supporters were afraid and got out of there in a hurry. They knew they would be regarded as traitors. Adonijah, fearing for his life, ran to the tabernacle and caught hold of the horns of the altar for sanctuary.

And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me today that he will not slay his servant with the sword.

And Solomon said, If he will shew himself a worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die [[1Kings 1:51-52](#)].

Solomon is being very fair with Adonijah. If Adonijah shows himself to be a loyal subject, then nothing will happen to him.

So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to thine house [[1Kings 1:53](#)].

4. He made conquests of many nations which paid tribute to Israel and its king. He extended the borders of the country to Egypt on the south, and to the River Euphrates on the north and east. David is actually the one who extended Israel's borders farther than they had ever been extended before or since. The peace during the reign of Solomon was possible because David had subdued Israel's enemies.
5. Although an Oriental monarch with a sizable harem, David's foreign marriages were largely political and relatively free from religious and moral corruption. Having a harem was the custom of that day, but God did not approve of David's many wives, and it was largely due to them that he was in hot water all of the time. The many sons that were born to him by these women caused constant dissension inside the palace. It was something that caused David woe and sorrow all of his life. It was Solomon, and not David, who was influenced by a foreign wife. It is true that David committed an awful sin, but it occurred before his marriage to Bathsheba. There was not even a breath of scandal after that.
6. David was a poet and musician who endeared himself to the people as the "sweet psalmist of Israel" and gave to us at least seventy-three psalms.
7. David planned the temple, which was to exalt the religious life of the nation and the worship of Jehovah, although he was not permitted to build the Lord's house.
8. Although there was still rivalry of a sort between the ten tribes of the north and Judah and Benjamin in the south -- and had been since the death of Saul and his son -- David had no serious difficulty in uniting all tribes under his rule and making Jerusalem the national capital.
9. At the time of David's death, Israel was second to none in power and military prowess, and the people had a large measure of peace and freedom, as every man "sat under his own vine and fig tree." The peace that Solomon enjoyed during his reign was a peace that had been made by David during his reign.

And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword.

Now therefore hold him not guiltless: for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood [[1Kings 2:8-9](#)].

David is revealing here what seems like a vengeful spirit, but it actually is not. Although Shimei had demonstrated that he was a traitor, because David had made an oath not to touch him, Shimei was still alive. David was a man of his word. Now, however, he tells Solomon to keep his watchful eye on him, and if he reveals any of his treachery, Solomon is to deal with him accordingly. The time does come, by the way, when Solomon deals with Shimei, but only after he disobeys and reveals that he is indeed a traitor.

David's Death (2:10-12)

So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David.

And the days that David reigned over Israel were forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

Then sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom was established greatly [[1Kings 2:10-12](#)].

There is a note of sadness in the death of David. He had been a great man of God. Do you recall the first son of David and Bathsheba? He died when he was just a few days old. David said of him, "He will never come to me, but I will go to him." Now David has gone to be with that child.

Solomon, now that his father is gone, comes to the throne. At the change of any dynasty or ruler there is always a time of turmoil and great change.

Solomon's Accession To The Throne (2:13-46)

And Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, Comest thou peaceably? And he said, Peaceably.

He said moreover, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And she said, Say on [[1Kings 2:13-14](#)].

Even though Solomon is now on the throne, Adonijah has not given up the idea about wanting to be king. He comes to Bathsheba still harboring this thought. She does not have much confidence in him and inquires about his mission. He says that it is a peaceful one. She says, "Say on" -- in other words, "I'm listening."

And he said, Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's: for it was his from the LORD [[1Kings 2:15](#)].

He is saying that he was more popular than Solomon and the people wanted him as king.

And now I ask one petition of thee, deny me not. And she said unto him, Say on.

And he said, Speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king, (for he will not say thee nay,) that he give me Abishag the Shunammite to wife [[1Kings 2:16-17](#)].

He is saying, "Since the kingdom has been taken away from me, I have only one small request. I would like Abishag for my wife." Abishag, you recall, nursed David during his last days.

And Bath-sheba said, Well; I will speak for thee unto the king.

Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand.

Then she said, I desire one small petition of thee; I pray thee, say me not nay. And the king said unto her, Ask on, my mother: for I will not say thee nay.

And she said, Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife [[1Kings 2:18-21](#)].

This was an audacious request, but Adonijah knew that Solomon would not deny his mother anything. That is the reason he went to Bathsheba instead of going directly to Solomon.

And king Solomon answered and said unto his mother, And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom also; for he is mine elder brother; even for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah.

Then king Solomon swore by the LORD, saying, God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this word against his own life [[1Kings 2:22-23](#)].

What Adonijah was actually doing was making a move toward the throne. He was doing a dangerous thing, but he was being very clever about it all. Adonijah was Solomon's elder brother, and Solomon, of course, had been aware of his brother's move to seize the throne before David named a successor. Although Bathsheba, in her simplicity, felt that Adonijah's request for Abishag was reasonable, Solomon's keen mind instantly penetrated the plot.

Now therefore, as the LORD liveth, which hath established me, and set me on the throne of David my father, and who hath made me an house, as he promised, Adonijah shall be put to death this day.

And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him that he died [[1Kings 2:24-25](#)].

Adonijah's death was a brutal thing, of course, but his death eliminated a contender for the throne. It was necessary to execute him in order to establish Solomon on the throne. As long as Adonijah lived, he would continue to connive and plot in an attempt to seize the throne.

Now, having removed Adonijah, Solomon realized it would be necessary to remove from positions of influence those who had supported him.

And unto Abiathar the priest said the king, Get thee to Anathoth, unto thine own fields; for thou art worthy of death: but I will not at this time put thee to death, because thou barest the ark of the Lord GOD before David my father, and because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted.

So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the LORD; that he might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh [[1Kings 2:26-27](#)].

Abiathar, a descendent of Aaron, was removed from his priestly office and sent home in disgrace because he had participated in Adonijah's rebellion. The only reason he was not

executed was because of his faithfulness to David during Absalom's rebellion. This ended the line of Eli.

Then tidings came to Joab: for Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom, And Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.

And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD; and, behold, he is by the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, Go, fall upon him.

And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay; but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me [[1Kings 2:28-30](#)].

When Joab heard what happened to Abiathar and Adonijah, he took off for the tall timber. He ran to the tabernacle of the Lord and caught hold of the horns of the altar for sanctuary. Solomon chose Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, to be Joab's executioner. He went after Joab and asked him to come outside the tabernacle. Joab refused, saying, "I'll die here if I have to die."

And the king said unto him, Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father.

And the LORD shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing thereof, to wit, Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah [[1Kings 2:31-32](#)].

Joab had been a bloody man.

Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the LORD.

So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him: and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness [[1Kings 2:33-34](#)].

He was executed because of his part in a rebellion against Solomon.

Shimei was another traitor. David would not touch him because he had given his word that he would not. Solomon now puts restrictions on him.

And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Build thee an house in Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither [[1Kings 2:36](#)].

Solomon wanted Shimei to be where he could keep his eye on him. Wherever Shimei went, he sowed seeds of rebellion. Solomon wanted to watch his every move.

For it shall be, that on the day thou goest out, and passest over the brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die: thy blood shall be upon thine own head.

And Shimei said unto the king, The saying is good: as my lord the king hath said, so will thy servant do. And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days [[1Kings 2:37-38](#)].

Solomon commanded Shimei to build a home in Jerusalem and to remain within the city limits. He was forbidden to return and live with his own tribe. Shimei promised to be obedient to Solomon's terms.

And it came to pass at the end of three years, that two of the servants of Shimei ran away unto Achish son of Maachah king of Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, Behold, thy servants be in Gath.

And Shimei arose, and saddled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish to seek his servants: and Shimei went, and brought his servants from Gath [[1Kings 2:39-40](#)].

Shimei went outside the city limits. He did this in direct disobedience to Solomon's orders. Solomon was told what Shimei had done; so the king sent for him.

Why then hast thou not kept the oath of the LORD, and the commandment that I have charged thee with?

The king said moreover to Shimei, Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father: therefore the LORD shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head;

And king Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD for ever.

So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; which went out, and fell upon him, that he died. And the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon [[1Kings 2:43-46](#)].

With Shimei's death Solomon had completed the charge made to him by David his father. Solomon had removed most of the contenders to the throne. Now he could reign in peace.

CHAPTERS 3 AND 4

Chapter 3

THEME: Solomon's prayer for wisdom and God's answer

In the chapters before us God appears to Solomon in a dream saying, "Ask what I shall give thee." Solomon asks for wisdom to govern Israel. His unselfish request so pleases God that He promises him much more than he asked for. In addition to wisdom, He gives him riches and honor. Solomon's decision in the cases of two mothers claiming one child demonstrates that God had truly given him a wise and understanding heart.

office. All of them are telling us how great they are and what marvelous abilities they have. They assure us that they are able to solve the problems. By now, friend, some of us have come to the conclusion that these boys are just kidding us. They don't have the solution and they don't have the wisdom. If only some men would come on the scene and say, "I don't have the wisdom; I recognize my inadequacies. But I am going to depend on God to lead and guide me." Something like that would be so startling it would probably rock the world. That is what Solomon said, and God commended him for it. It was a great step.

Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee [[1Kings 3:12](#)].

Solomon does stand out as being a wise ruler. When you read the Books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, you will find human wisdom on the highest plane. I do not mean that these books are not inspired of God. It is obvious that God through Solomon is giving the highest of human wisdom, making it clear in both books that mere human wisdom is totally inadequate to meet the issues of life.

And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days [[1Kings 3:13-14](#)].

The standard, as we have indicated before, is David. That is a human standard and is not very high. But, frankly, few of the kings even came up to that standard.

And Solomon awoke; and, behold, it was a dream. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants [[1Kings 3:15](#)].

The burnt offerings and peace offerings point to the Lord Jesus Christ. The burnt offering speaks of who He is. The peace offering speaks of the fact that He made peace by shedding His blood on the cross. Because of who He is, He is able to bring us into a right relationship with God. The shedding of His blood makes it possible to remove the guilt of our sins.

In the last part of this chapter we have a demonstration of Solomon's wisdom. He gives a clever solution to a real problem. There were two women. They were harlots, and they had one child between them. Each woman claimed the child as her own. They brought the matter to Solomon. How would you solve the problem? How would you find out who the real mother was? I suppose today some scientific method of determining the mother would be pursued, but Solomon had no such recourse. Solomon said to the women, "Since both of you claim the child, we will cut the baby in half, and each of you may have half of the child." The one who was not the mother, who had no love for the child and apparently had it in for the real mother, replied, "Sure, go ahead and cut the child in

And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.

And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt [[1Kings 4:29-30](#)].

The east is where the wise men came from.

For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about [[1Kings 4:31](#)].

Four outstanding wise men are mentioned in this verse.

And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.

And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes [[1Kings 4:32-33](#)].

We are told that Solomon spoke three thousand proverbs. We have only a few hundred recorded in the Bible. His songs were a thousand and five. Believe me, he was a song writer. We have only one of his songs, The Song of Solomon. Solomon was a dendrologist -- "He spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall." The hyssop is a humble little plant that grows on rocks. Solomon was also a zoologist -- "he spake also of beasts" -- and an ornithologist since he spoke of birds. He was an entomologist: he spoke of creeping things, or insects. He was an ichthyologist: he spoke of fishes. He spoke of these things because he had studied them and was an authority in these particular realms. This, apparently, is the beginning of the sciences. Solomon was interested in these things.

And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom [[1Kings 4:34](#)].

Solomon gained a worldwide reputation for his wisdom, and many came to hear him. We have a few of the proverbs that he wrote recorded in the Book of Proverbs. As I have said before, these proverbs are extremely helpful to any young person entering adult life. There are certain proverbs that can guide a young man in life and business. You see, God is very practical with us. He gets right down to the nitty-gritty, where you and I walk in and out of the marts of trade, where we enter into the courts of the land and into social gatherings. Certain guiding principles of life are given to us in Proverbs. I am not saying that a young man can become a Christian by following the proverbs of Solomon, but he certainly will have a marvelous guide for his life.

CHAPTERS 5 AND 6

Chapter 5

THEME: Preparation and construction of the temple

In chapter 5 Solomon works out a business deal with King Hiram of Tyre for cedar and workmen. Also out of Israel he raises a levy of thirty thousand workmen.

Chapter 6 details the construction of this costly and ornate temple which took seven years to complete.

And Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto Solomon; for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father: for Hiram was ever a lover of David [[1Kings 5:1](#)].

Whatever King Hiram of Tyre is going to do will not be because of Solomon but because of his love, esteem, and respect for King David.

And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying,

Thou knowest how that David my father could not build an house unto the name of the LORD his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet.

But now the LORD my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent [[1Kings 5:2-4](#)].

Friend, only God can give peace, whether it is world peace or peace in the human heart. God alone can give the rest today that the human heart needs. That is why our Lord, when they rejected Him as king, could send out His personal, private, individual invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden" -- that is, burdened with sin -- "and I will give you rest" ([Matt. 11:28](#)). Only Christ can give that kind of rest. Now God had given Solomon rest from warfare. There was peace on every side.

And, behold, I purpose to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name [[1Kings 5:5](#)].

Although the building of the temple all stems from David, he was not permitted to build it because he was a man of war.

Perhaps we should consider some of the background relative to the building of the temple. Man has been a builder from the beginning. In [Genesis 4:17](#) we are told that Cain "... builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch." The face of the earth is scarred by great mounds that hide the ruins of great cities and splendid buildings of the past. The spade of the archaeologist has penetrated into the depths, and you can judge each civilization by the height of the buildings. There are those who say that the cave men of the Stone Age (if they ever existed) were barbarians and uncivilized. They were not builders but sought refuge in caves. The Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Greeks, and the Romans are all counted as civilized, and it is evidenced in their architecture. Modern man claims a high degree of culture because he has built subdivisions, shopping centers, apartment buildings, and tall office buildings. Today man is building his own cave in which to live and work -- like a gopher. The rest of the time

LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it. Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, and the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things" ([1Chron. 28:10-12](#)). David also gathered the material: "Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for things to be made of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and the brass for things of brass, the iron for things of iron, and wood for things of wood; onyx stones, and stones to be set, glistening stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance" ([1Chron. 29:2](#)). The conception of the temple, you see, was in the heart of David. Solomon merely executed the construction of it.

Now with all David's accumulation of material at hand, Solomon contracts with Hiram king of Tyre for cedar and fir timber for the actual construction of the edifice.

And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have considered the things which thou sentest to me for: and I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir.

My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea: and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them: and thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household [[1Kings 5:8-9](#)].

In addition to the workmen from Tyre, Solomon employed a large work force of Israelites.

And king Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty thousand men.

And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses: a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home: and Adoniram was over the levy [[1Kings 5:13-14](#)].

This was a tremendous enterprise. After Solomon had built the temple, he went on to build other things. He had a building project that was too big, and he overtaxed his people.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 brings us to the actual construction of the temple. You will notice that the temple is twice as large as the tabernacle was. It is more ornate, elaborate, and costly. The simplicity of the tabernacle was lost, and there appears to be a spiritual deterioration, as we shall see.

And the house which king Solomon built for the LORD, the length thereof was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits [[1Kings 6:2](#)].

Although the temple was twice as large as the tabernacle, it may have been smaller than we realize. The tabernacle was 30 x 10 cubits "and the height thereof 30 cubits." The temple was three times higher than the tabernacle, which had been nothing in the world but a tent.

Even though the temple was small, it was like a jewel. Now a diamond is not as big as a straw stack, but it is much more valuable. That was true of the temple Solomon built.

And the porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof before the house.

And for the house he made windows of narrow lights.

And against the wall of the house he built chambers round about, against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and of the oracle: and he made chambers round about:

The nethermost chamber was five cubits broad, and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad: for without in the wall of the house he made narrowed rests round about, that the beams should not be fastened in the walls of the house.

And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building [[1Kings 6:3-7](#)].

Let me say a word about the construction of the temple. As we have seen, it was only twice as large as the tabernacle. It was surrounded on three sides by a three-story building. This was the place where the priests lived during their course of service. In the front there was a portico that was 10 x 20 x 120 cubits -- half as long as a football field. The brazen altar was 20 x 20 x 10 cubits, while the altar of the tabernacle was 5 x 5 x 3 cubits. There were ten lampstands to replace the one of the tabernacle. There were ten tables of showbread rather than one. There was a multiplication of some of the articles of furniture.

There were 30,000 Israelites used in the construction; they were drafted for the work. There were 150,000 extra workers and 3,300 overseers used in the construction of the building. Hiram, king of Tyre, furnished the material and the artifices. The temple was completed in seven years and six months. The temple was made of stone, and the sound of a hammer was not heard during the building. The cost of the building is estimated around five million dollars. It was like a jewel box. There were two pillars in it which were very impressive. Later on we will see what they mean.

I have mentioned these details by way of comparison. The temple was inferior to the tabernacle, not only in innate quality, but in that which the temple characterizes.

First of all, it was complicated. The simplicity of the tabernacle was lost. In the New Testament the temple is bypassed and the tabernacle is used for the typology. Why? Well, the temple had become very complicated. This has an application for us. We are living in

a day when the emphasis is put on methods rather than on the Word of God. The church is filled with new programs and new methods.

When I first began my ministry I pastored in a little white church on a red clay hill in Georgia, surrounded by a cotton patch. We just had a back room that served as Sunday school. We didn't have very good facilities. We did have central heating, however, as a great big old potbellied stove sat right in the middle of the church. I went by that church a short time ago. The city of Atlanta has grown all around it now. The church now has a big Christian education department and all of the latest equipment. I asked a member of the church, one who had been saved during my ministry, "Does anybody ever get saved here today?" He said, "No. Nobody has been saved." May I say to you that there is a girl out on the mission field who was saved when it was a little old simple church. Although it was very simple, people got saved. I don't like all of the methods employed today. I think we need to get back to the Word of God.

The second thing I want you to notice is that Solomon made windows of narrow lights. There had been no windows in the tabernacle. Now Solomon's windows did not let in much light, but they did let in a little. The people no longer depended upon divine light as they had in the tabernacle. They depended on the natural light which came from outside.

The third indication of inferiority is that the cherubim were made of olive wood. They were ten cubits high -- very impressive -- but they were no longer made of solid gold. The fourth thing is that the temple was more ornate and gaudy than the tabernacle, and there was more ceremony and ritual connected with it.

This is the temple that was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. The temple put up by Zerubbabel was destroyed in turn and then supplanted by Herod's temple in Christ's day. The temple actually pointed to the Lord Jesus Christ. In [John 2:19](#) Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." He wasn't talking about Herod's temple; He was talking about His body: "Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body" ([John 2:20-21](#)). The temple is equated with the body of Christ.

Because this chapter is largely a record of building detail, I have not quoted much of it. However, you will find it very interesting to read. As you read of the magnificence of the temple, keep in mind that it was conceived in the mind and heart of David, as he wanted a suitable place to house the ark of the covenant. (He had no idea, of course, of building a dwelling place for God; he said it was only a footstool for Him.) Its purpose was to provide access to God by sacrifice. Also notice how complicated it is in comparison to the tabernacle. After I had written a book on the tabernacle, I was going to follow it with a book on the temple. After a great deal of study, I threw up my hands in despair. It is much too complicated to illustrate or set before us the wonderful person of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, God honored it with His presence, and the place was filled with the Shekinah glory, as we shall see in the following chapter.

Chapter 7

THEME: Solomon's building projects

In chapter 7 we learn that not only did Solomon build the temple, but he built his own palace, the house of the forest of Lebanon, and a palace for the daughter of Pharaoh. Also in this chapter we have details concerning the construction of the porch of the temple, the molten sea for the temple, the ten lavers of brass, and the ten golden lampstands for the temple.

But Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all his house [[1Kings 7:1](#)].

It took seven years to build the temple, but it took almost twice that long to build his own house. It must have been a very elaborate palace.

He built also the house of the forest of Lebanon; the length thereof was an hundred cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits, upon four rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams upon the pillars [[1Kings 7:2](#)].

Solomon also built the house of the forest of Lebanon. That was his lodge, his second house. Perhaps that is where he went on vacation. We are told that the "length thereof was an hundred cubits," which is half the length of a football field. The breadth was fifty cubits, which is seventy-five feet. The height of it was thirty cubits; that is forty-five feet. It was built "upon four rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams upon the pillars." Hiram, king of Tyre, furnished the stone and the cedars, which were the cedars of Lebanon. There are very few of those tall, graceful cedars left today. All of that country, including Palestine, has been denuded. Apparently at one time it was heavily timbered.

And his house where he dwelt had another court within the porch, which was of the like work. Solomon made also an house for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken to wife, like unto this porch [[1Kings 7:8](#)].

"Of the like work" indicates it was also very ornate and elaborate. He built a house for Pharaoh's daughter -- he seems to have put her in a favored position. He could not build each wife such a palace. If he had, he would have built a thousand palaces! That would have been a staggering building program, like a government housing development.

Hiram, The Artisan (7:13-51)

And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre.

He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass: and he was filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work [[1Kings 7:13-14](#)].

This man is Hiram, the artisan, and not Hiram, the king. He was a skilled worker in brass. He was the one who made all of the delicate pieces of statuary and the items that were made out of iron, brass, and gold. His work was highly ornamented, which is what Solomon wanted. Elaborate ornamentation is evidence of the affluent period and time of peace in which he lived. It is during an era of peace and prosperity that the arts develop. During Solomon's reign there was peace and plenty.

Now we are given more detail relative to the temple.

It takes more than size and beauty to bring cleansing to the heart. There are many churches today that conduct beautiful services, yet they do not cleanse the congregation nor bring them into the presence of God. They do not refresh the soul nor bring peace and joy to the heart. All the lavers in the world cannot cleanse one from sin. It is the water in the laver that cleanses. The water represents the Word of God. To wash in the Word of God is to apply the Word to the life.

And Solomon made all the vessels that pertained unto the house of the LORD: the altar of gold, and the table of gold, whereupon the shewbread was.

And the candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right side, and five on the left, before the oracle, with the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs of gold [[1Kings 7:48-49](#)].

In the tabernacle there was one lampstand which spoke of Christ. In the temple there were ten. Again there is multiplication that has an application for us. In our contemporary society there is danger in becoming overly familiar with the Lord Jesus Christ. For example, the other day I listened to a message given on the radio in which the speaker mentioned the name of Jesus over fifty times before he was halfway through his message. To keep mentioning His name over and over is like multiplying lampstands. Also I heard a man say the other day that he was going to come into the presence of Jesus and sit down and talk with Him. Maybe he will; I don't know. But the Bible does not suggest such familiarity with the glorified Christ. A man who was very familiar with Him when He was here on earth -- who rebuked Him and made suggestions to Him, and reclined on His bosom in the upper room -- was John. He was very familiar with Him in the days of His flesh. But John writes of his reaction when he sees the glorified Christ in these terms: "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead . . ." ([Rev. 1:17](#)). I think that is where you and I are going to be when we come into Christ's presence. My friend, let's not keep multiplying lampstands, becoming overly familiar with Him. He is the One whom we worship and adore. He is the One before whom we fall down upon our faces.

So was ended all the work that king Solomon made for the house of the LORD. And Solomon brought in the things which David his father had dedicated; even the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, did he put among the treasures of the house of the LORD [[1Kings 7:51](#)].

Chapter 8

THEME: Dedication of the finished temple

In the chapter before us the ark of the covenant is brought into the completed temple, the Shekinah glory fills the house of the Lord, and Solomon gives his message and prayer of dedication.

Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the

they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near [[1Kings 8:46](#)].

This, by the way, is God's estimate of you and me -- "there is no man that sinneth not." Don't tell me that you don't sin. God says you do.

Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness.

And so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name [[1Kings 8:47-48](#)].

This is what they are to do when their temple is destroyed and they are captives in a strange land. This is exactly what Daniel will do over in Babylon. He will open his window toward Jerusalem and pray toward that temple, confessing the sins of his people and his own sins.

Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause.

And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them [[1Kings 8:49-50](#)].

As we shall see, God will answer this prayer.

And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven [[1Kings 8:54](#)].

There has always been a question about the proper posture of prayer. Should you stand, kneel, get down on all fours, or prostrate yourself before the Lord on the ground? Solomon knelt when he prayed. Although no particular posture is essential -- you can pray in most any position -- this is where the posture of kneeling is mentioned. I think it was Victor Hugo who said that the soul is on its knees many times regardless of the posture of the body. It is the posture of the heart that is important.

And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD.

The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court that was before the house of the LORD: for there he offered burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings: because the brasen altar that was before the LORD was too little to receive the

burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings.

And at that time Solomon held a feast, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days [[1Kings 8:63-65](#)].

Obviously, the altars in the temple could not accommodate all the animal sacrifices mentioned in this passage. Therefore temporary altars were erected to handle the large number of animals which were sacrificed at this time. I think that these altars reached all the way up north to Hamath and all the way south to the river of Egypt. After the animals were offered, they were taken off the altars and divided among the people. It was a time of great celebration and picnicking, you might say.

On the eighth day he sent the people away: and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people [[1Kings 8:66](#)].

CHAPTERS 9 AND 10

Chapter 9

THEME: The fame of Solomon; the visit of the queen of Sheba

God appears to Solomon a second time to encourage him, and He sets up David as a standard of measurement for him. The remainder of these two chapters gives proof of Solomon's greatness and of the prosperity of his reign.

God Appears To Solomon A Second Time (9:1-9)

And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do,

That the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon.

And the LORD said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually [[1Kings 9:1-3](#)].

God is saying to Solomon, "I will meet with you here at the temple. This is the place for you to come, for the people to come, and for the world to come. This is the meeting place."

And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments [[1Kings 9:4](#)].

Frankly, the presents from these visitors enabled Solomon to build up a kingdom that was noted for its riches. Later, of course, that made Israel the subject of spoil by other nations when the kingdom was divided and weakened.

And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem [[1Kings 10:26](#)].

Solomon, as he gathered horses and horsemen, expanded in a department in which God had forbidden him to expand. Solomon's stables would make these modern race tracks look like a tenant farmer's barn in Georgia.

And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycomore trees that are in the vale, for abundance.

And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.

And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty: and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring them out by their means [[1Kings 10:27-29](#)].

Solomon really built up tremendous wealth in the kingdom. At that time he actually cornered the market on gold, silver, and precious stones.

My friend, what are you busy doing today? Are you getting out the Word of God or are you in the business of gathering a bunch of apes? Do you pay more for entertainment than you do for the Word of God? How about the peacocks for beauty? More money is spent today on beauty preparations than is given to the Lord's work. What about gold, silver, and precious stones? Are you so busy making money that you have no time left for the Lord? Oh, my friend, we are called to witness to the world. God have mercy on us for going into the business of apes and peacocks. How frivolous!

Chapter 11

THEME: The shame and death of Solomon

Solomon is the most colossal failure in the pages of Scripture. ". . . For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required . . ." ([Luke 12:48](#)). He had the greatest opportunity of any man who ever lived. He began by failing to remove false religion ([1Kings 3:3](#)). What was at first only a spot became a plague of leprosy. He had a harem of one thousand wives, pagan women, who turned his heart away from the Lord. For this reason God stirred up enemies against Solomon and allowed Jeroboam to rise to prominence and finally split the kingdom.

Solomon Forsakes God (11:1-13)

Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father [[1Kings 11:33](#)].

The prophet continues with his message. For David's sake, God will not take the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, but He will take it out of the hand of Solomon's son and give ten tribes to Jeroboam.

After these things, Jeroboam is forced to flee for his life.

Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. And Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon [[1Kings 11:40](#)].

Solomon's Death (11:41-43)

And the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon?

And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years.

And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead [[1Kings 11:41-43](#)].

We will see more of the acts of Solomon and his wisdom in 1 and 2 Chronicles. He was a colorful ruler in the sense that he accumulated so much of this world's goods. Everything in the kingdom denoted wealth, affluence, and prosperity. In the New Testament our Lord refers to the glory that was Solomon's. There was indeed an earthly glory in his kingdom.

CHAPTERS 12--14

Chapter 12

THEME: Division of the kingdom under Rehoboam and Jeroboam

In chapter 12 Rehoboam, son of Solomon, succeeds to the throne. Jeroboam returns from Egypt and leads ten tribes in demanding a reduction in taxes. Rehoboam, under the influence of the young men of his kingdom, having rejected the counsel of the old men who were Solomon's advisors, turns down the request of the ten northern tribes. Instead of reducing taxes, he threatens to raise them. Therefore, Jeroboam leads the ten tribes in revolt.

Jeroboam divides the nation religiously as well as politically by setting up a golden calf in Bethel and one in the tribe of Dan. The northern tribes go into idolatry.

Rehoboam's Accession And Foolishness (12:1-15)

Solomon dies, and his son Rehoboam comes to the throne.

And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.

And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt:)

That they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying,

Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee.

And he said unto them, Depart yet for three days, then come again to me. And the people departed [[1Kings 12:1-5](#)].

Solomon had carried on a tremendous building program at great cost. After his death the people asked for their taxes to be lowered. We hear about the government costing so much today. If you want to know why it costs so much, go to the capital of any state, or go to any county seat or to our capital in Washington, D.C., and you will see why taxes are like they are. Believe me, government is a fat calf. It is really spending money and putting up many buildings. Spending requires increased taxation; this is something that is always going to cause trouble. Our problem today is one of taxation -- our government costs too much. We are seeing the increase in buildings to house more committees and more workers. Before long there will probably be more people working for the government than are working in all other jobs put together. This is the movement today; there was the same problem during the days of Solomon. He kept building and in order to do it, he had to increase the taxes.

Rehoboam was asked by the people to reduce taxes. This young ruler had an opportunity to move in and make himself popular by reducing taxes. If he had done that, the people would have followed him. Where is the man today who has the nerve, after being elected to office, to fire about half of the government workers? If someone would do that and cut down taxes, he would make himself popular. Leaders are afraid to take the first step.

Rehoboam called a meeting of his wise men (only they were very unwise).

And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people?

And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever [[1Kings 12:6-7](#)].

Rehoboam first turned to the wise men in the kingdom who had counseled Solomon his father. Their advice was good, but Rehoboam did not follow it.

But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him:

So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day [[1Kings 12:19](#)].

Israel rebelled against the house of David until the time 1 Kings was written. It was a rebellion that continued on until they returned from the Babylonian captivity. Rehoboam's unwise decision in not listening to the people enabled Jeroboam to take the ten northern tribes and build a northern kingdom.

Jeroboam's Idolatry (12:25-30)

Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Penuel.

And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David:

If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah.

Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

And he set the one in Beth-el, and the other put he in Dan.

And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan [[1Kings 12:25-30](#)].

Jeroboam put a golden calf in Bethel and one in Dan. He put them there for the people to worship so that they would not go to Jerusalem to worship in the temple. This marks the division of the kingdom into the northern and southern kingdoms.

We will now follow the account of the divided kingdom and will find that the method used in 1 and 2 Kings is to record some history about Israel and then some history about Judah. The record goes back and forth. We will be looking at both kingdoms as we go along, but the kingdom of Judah will last longer than the kingdom of Israel. Also, almost all of the prophets, except the postcaptivity prophets, prophesied during this period (see Chronological Table of the Kings of the Divided Kingdom, p. 227). The Table shows which kings of Judah and Israel were contemporary -- that is, those who ruled at the same time -- and which prophets prophesied during each reign.

This brings us to the end of [1Kings 12](#). Rehoboam is the king of the southern kingdom following in the Davidic line. Jeroboam is the king of the northern kingdom. He has introduced idolatry into the north by building two golden calves and placing them in Bethel and Dan so that the people would no longer go to Jerusalem to worship. There is a division -- soon civil war will break out. It will continue until the northern kingdom goes into captivity. And we will find that eventually the southern kingdom will also go into captivity. This is a sad period in the life of the nation of Israel. It contains many lessons for us and for our government.

wrong if you have been called to glorify God -- to witness and live for Him. Solomon had a definite weakness.

The Book of Proverbs reveals the wisdom of Solomon, but the Book of Ecclesiastes reveals his foolishness. You will not find any failure of Solomon's or his father David's in the Book of Chronicles. The two Books of Chronicles cover the same ground as the Books of Kings with one difference: in Kings you have man's viewpoint; you have the history given. Chronicles gives God's viewpoint. God forgave David; and, when God forgave him, He blotted out his sin. Written from God's viewpoint, the sin is not mentioned in Chronicles, but God put it in Kings for men to see. Likewise God forgave Solomon his failure, and his sin is not recorded in Chronicles. In Kings we do see Solomon's weakness -- he began to multiply wives. God never approved of polygamy; His wrath was against it.

The interesting thing is that immorality and false religion always go together. John made it very clear for the Christian when he said, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" ([1John 1:6](#)). Don't kid yourself -- you cannot serve God and have fellowship with Him if you live in sin. You can fool the people around you. Unfortunately, we have Christian leaders today who live in sin. They have been proven immoral, and yet people go ahead and support them -- I have never quite understood why. But they are not fooling God, and they certainly are not having fellowship with Him.

Solomon was a man who was a great failure. There are two men in the Scripture who had tremendous potential and opportunity: one was Samson, and the other one was Solomon. Both of these men failed God in a tragic way. In Ecclesiastes Solomon said, "Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit" ([Eccl. 2:17](#)). The glory of Solomon was a passing glory. Our Lord could say that Solomon in all his glory is not arrayed like that little flower by the side of the road that you passed unnoticed. May I say to you that the wealth and achievements of this world are also a passing glory.

I have given this background of Solomon at this point -- I guess I have more or less preached his funeral service -- because now we are seeing a kingdom divided, and it is divided because of the sin of Solomon.

Chapter 13

The Prophecy Against Jeroboam's False Altar (13:1-34)

We are going to move rather rapidly through this section -- it is history. We will be following the course of the two kingdoms, one following after the other or sometimes together or overlapping.

We find that Jeroboam, who came to the throne in the northern kingdom, was given an opportunity to really serve God. Yet his fear was that the tribes in the north would go back to Jerusalem to worship. That might reunite the kingdom, and he wanted to keep it separate. So Jeroboam set up two golden calves for the people to worship, one in Samaria and one in Bethel.

And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Beth-el: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense.

And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee [[1Kings 13:1-2](#)].

Let me pause here a moment. It is interesting to note when Josiah reigned. It was almost three hundred years later, but the prophet of God marks him out now. He was a good king and he reigned thirty-one years. Josiah led in one of the five great revivals that took place during the period of the kings. We will consider those revivals in Chronicles. These revivals are not mentioned in Kings but in Chronicles, which gives God's viewpoint. Revival is always from God's viewpoint. Man is interested in numbers, but it is impossible for him to determine the real converts. God knows the hearts and knows whether a spiritual movement has taken place or not.

The prophet of God prophesied against the altar, saying that God was going to raise up a man who would destroy such altars. Josiah was the one who would be raised up to accomplish that task.

And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.

And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Beth-el, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him [[1Kings 13:3-4](#)].

Jeroboam was by the altar when the man of God prophesied. He was making a sacrifice to a golden calf. When the man of God was finished speaking, Jeroboam put out his hand against him. In effect, the king was saying, "Lay hold on him. He is to be slain." When the king pointed to the man of God, his hand dried up; that is, it withered and became paralyzed.

The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.

And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Entreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before.

And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward [[1Kings 13:5-7](#)].

The king changes his tune very definitely and begs the man of God to ask the Lord that his arm might be restored. The king's hand is restored to him, and in appreciation he offers to take the man of God home with him and reward him.

And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place:

For so it was charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.

So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Beth-el [[1Kings 13:8-10](#)].

The man of God will not compromise with evil and idolatry. This is quite remarkable.

This is the place to say that there is a lot of double-talk and subterfuge in supposedly fundamentalist Christian circles. I have recently read a statement issued by a certain seminary that claims to be fundamental, and is trying to build a reputation as a conservative school. I have never before read such double-talk in any statement. It claims a super piety and a super intellectualism that is nothing in the world but a denial of the things of God. There is such compromise today in Christian circles! I don't mean that we are to become ugly and cantankerous, or to not speak to certain individuals or have fellowship with them. That is not the point. But what we do need is to have a clear-cut, honest statement of where we stand theologically.

My Christian friend, many believers are supporting organizations that they are not sure are sound. If you don't know whether or not a ministry is giving out the Word of God, you ought to check into it. It is important, and God will hold you responsible for how you invest your money. These are evil days in which we live. They were evil days during the time of Jeroboam, and this prophet was not about to stay and have lunch with the king. He refused to become involved with him.

However, in the next several verses we find that he was deceived by another prophet into disobeying the Lord and suffered the sad consequences. Although he was wary of association with an idolatrous king, he was deceived by a man who claimed to have counter directions from God. My friend, when the church of God today gets involved in the things of the world and makes all kinds of compromises, it is a stench in the nostrils of Almighty God. We are living in days that are much like Jeroboam's, and we need to exercise the same caution and discernment that was needed then by God's man.

You would think that the experience Jeroboam had with the man of God would have changed him. His hand had been withered and healed. Do you think he changed?

After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places.

Old Rehoboam is now beginning to go down, but he is keeping up a front. When the golden shields are taken by the king of Egypt, he substitutes brass shields.

Next we are told that there was civil war.

And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days [[1Kings 14:30](#)].

Finally, we have the death of Rehoboam.

And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess. And Abijam his son reigned in his stead [[1Kings 14:31](#)].

CHAPTERS 15 AND 16

Chapter 15

THEME: Kings of the divided kingdom

In chapter 15 two of Judah's kings are mentioned: Abijam, a sinful king, and Asa, a good king. Also the reigns of two of Israel's kings are given to us: Nadab, the son of Jeroboam, who walked in the sins of his father, and Baasha, who murdered him and reigned in his stead.

Chapter 16 continues with the history of Baasha, then four other kings of Israel -- each more wicked than his successor: Elah, Zimri, Omri, and Ahab who compounded his wickedness by marrying the infamous Jezebel.

Rehoboam Is Succeeded By Abijam (15:1-6)

I feel that we need a double portion of the Spirit of God as we go through this section. In the last part of chapter 14 we were told that Rehoboam, a son of Solomon, reigned over the southern kingdom of Judah and Benjamin. Jeroboam reigned over Israel in the north. He is the one who led a rebellion of the ten northern tribes. Civil war continued between the two kingdoms. It was a bitter war with brother fighting brother -- there is nothing quite as bad as that.

We have also noted that so far none of the kings have been good. In fact, there is never a good king in Israel, and only eight good kings in the southern kingdom of Judah in the line of David.

We find that after the death of Rehoboam, his son Abijam (also called Abijah) comes to the throne:

Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat reigned Abijam over Judah.

Three years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom [[1Kings 15:1-2](#)].

There is something quite interesting that you will find all through this section: every time a king is mentioned his mother is also mentioned. That is unusual. We are generally told who a man's father was and whom he succeeded, but in this portion the mother's name is given again and again. Why? It is because each mother had a great deal to do with influencing the life of her son. My position here is that the reason God recorded the name of the mother along with each king's name (and these are bad kings) is because she is partially responsible for the way he turned out. Also when the king was a good king, the mother was partially responsible. She must accept responsibility for him.

You and I are living in a time when a lot of condemnation and judgment are brought against young people who become vagrants and are dissolute. I recognize that trouble can arise out of a Christian home, but generally the background of a young person has something to do with the way he or she turns out. Ordinarily these troubled young people have a mother who is partially responsible for the way they act and live -- you cannot escape it, friend. Now I know that this cuts very deep and very hard, but we need to recognize that a mother has had a great opportunity to influence her little one, and if a little one has grown up to feel neglected, unwanted, and unloved, maybe the mother ought to stop and think. Instead of trying to be president of the missionary society, sing in the choir, and do everything else in the church, a mother would be doing more for the Lord if she would stay home some evening, take the little one up in her arms and love him and let him know how much she really appreciates him. This is something that is being neglected in our day. The biggest problem that most young couples have today is finding a baby sitter. May I say to you that we need a few more "mother sitters" who take time to train little Willie and little Susie. My friend, it takes a lot of time and love to rear a child -- this is something that is very important.

I have taken some extra time on this subject because, candidly, it will occur again and again. Every time we have a bad king, his mamma's name is given -- I think God is trying to tell us something. If he was a good king, his mother's name is also given; she will get credit for that. I just would not want to be the mother of some of the rascals we are going to find here in Scripture. It would disturb me a great deal to have a son like most of these kings.

And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father [[1Kings 15:3](#)].

Abijam walked in all the sins of his father -- he followed his father's pattern. Papa was to blame, also, for the way his son turned out; papa set the example. Abijam was not brought up in a very good home. He was a rotten, corrupt king, and his father and mother are responsible to a certain degree. We are told also that "his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father." David had become the standard for these kings. It is true that David was a human standard, but it was a standard that God accepted.

Nevertheless for David's sake did the LORD his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem [[1Kings 15:4](#)].

The line of David, friend, never ends until you come to the Lord Jesus Christ. It ended there -- you cannot follow the line of David after Christ. God says, "I won't let the lamp go out until the fulfillment of the covenant I made with David." There will come One to sit on his throne who will rule the world -- that One is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD,
and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all
the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite
[[1Kings 15:5](#)].

Why did God accept David as the standard? Because of his sin? No! That was a black spot on David's record. Although little man is in no position to sit in judgment upon God, we do it nonetheless. But if you are going to judge God about His relationship with David, understand what God really said about David. God listed David's assets and liabilities in this verse: David did not turn aside from anything that He commanded except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. That was the black spot on David's record. In every other matter he obeyed God. David did not live in sin. The king of Babylon did. What David did one time, the king of Babylon did every day. It was the weekend practice of the king of Egypt to do the thing David did one time. The whole thought is expressed by our Lord in the parable of the prodigal son. Friend, the son can get in the pigpen -- we need to recognize that. God's child can get in the pigpen, but by the same token the child of God will not stay in the pigpen. Why won't he? The reason is obvious: he is a son of the father; he is not a pig. Pigs live in pigpens. Sons want to live in the father's house. My friend, if you want to live in a pigpen, that is where you belong! And that tells who you are. However, if you are in the pigpen but you have a desire in your heart to cry out to God for forgiveness, He will hear you. When you turn back to Him, He will receive you. David did a wrong thing, but David confessed his sin. However, obedience to God was the norm for David. I think it behooves us to be very careful about criticizing David -- he was a great man. We are not worthy (at least I am not) to tie the strings of his shoes. He was a great man of God and became the earthly standard for the kings.

And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days
of his life [[1Kings 15:6](#)].

This was a time of civil strife. It was a time of brother fighting against brother, and it seriously weakened the kingdom.

Abijam Is Succeeded By Asa (15:7-12)

Now the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, are they not
written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And
there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

And Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city
of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead [[1Kings 15:7-8](#)].

Abijam did nothing outstanding during his reign -- all was evil. He was a bad king. So he died and was buried with his fathers.

Abijam was succeeded by his son Asa. Now we come to the first good king, and we feel like saying, "Hallelujah, we've found a good king!"

And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah.

And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.

And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father [[1Kings 15:9-11](#)].

You can see that there is an overlapping here of two years. Asa reigned during the last two years of Jeroboam's reign. Asa reigned for forty-one years. He had one of the longest reigns of any king. In fact, the only two kings who reigned longer than Asa were Azariah (or Uzziah) and Manasseh.

Asa's mother's name was Maachah. Isn't that interesting? Asa was a good king, and she gets credit here for the way Asa turned out. Again David is the standard of right and wrong for a king -- Asa measured up to David.

Now what did he do?

And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made [[1Kings 15:12](#)].

Asa did not go for the idea that we should be soft on homosexuals. He was opposed to homosexuality. It is not a mark of being civilized when any nation drops to the low level that we have today. God gives up any people who have a permissive society, openly allowing homosexuality. It is a mark of gross degradation -- we are going down as a nation. Someone needs to speak out against this today. We need to recognize it as a sin -- it is as corrupt, depraved, and degraded as any sin a person can commit. Man cannot sink any lower than this. When a person sinks this low, God gives him up. Our society is moving in that direction. Asa dealt with the problem, and he is called a good king. God has not changed His mind on this issue at all.

War With Baasha (15:16-22)

And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days [[1Kings 15:16](#)].

Asa made war against Baasha, king of Israel. It was continual civil war.

We are told that Asa did other things also. He had to appease a kingdom that was arising in the north and becoming dominant -- that kingdom was Syria.

Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants: and king Asa sent them to Ben-hadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,

There is a league between me and thee, and between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me [[1Kings 15:18-19](#)].

Asa sent Ben-hadad presents of gold and silver in order to appease him. To keep him from invading his kingdom, Asa made a league with him. This is probably the one thing he did that was wrong.

Then king Asa made a proclamation throughout all Judah: none was exempted: and they took away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded; and king Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah [[1Kings 15:22](#)].

Asa did all of this for protection, of course.

Asa Is Succeeded By Jehoshaphat (15:23-24)

The rest of all the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? Nevertheless in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.

And Asa slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead [[1Kings 15:23-24](#)].

As we shall see, Jehoshaphat was another good king.

Nadab Is Slain And Succeeded By Baasha (15:25-27)

Now we come back to Nadab, the son of Jeroboam:

And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years.

And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin [[1Kings 15:25-26](#)].

Nadab began to reign in the second year of the reign of Asa, king of Judah. Nadab ruled for two years over Israel. We will find in this succession of bad kings that there was a great deal of sin and political intrigue in the northern kingdom.

And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon [[1Kings 15:27](#)].

You would think that somewhere along the line there would be peace, but there was not. There was war between Asa and Baasha all their days. The continual civil war depleted the energy and resources of both the kingdoms. It also made both kingdoms subject to the powers round about them. They were invaded again and again by Egypt in the south, by Syria, and finally by Assyria in the north. These people simply would not change their ways.

Chapter 16

Baasha's Death, And The Reigns Of Elah And Zimri (16:3-18)

And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died [[1Kings 16:17-18](#)].

These were dark days for the kingdom, and there are darker days yet to come.

Tibni And Omri Are Rival Kings Of Israel (16:21-25)

After Omri's conspiracy succeeded in establishing him as king, another problem arose. A rival of Omri's also claimed to be king -- his name was Tibni.

Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri.

But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned [[1Kings 16:21-22](#)].

Omri put Tibni to death, and then Omri reigned. He ruled for twelve years. He was a bad king and exceeded the other kings in his evil deeds.

But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all that were before him [[1Kings 16:25](#)].

Accession Of Ahab; His Marriage To Jezebel (16:28-34)

So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead.

And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him [[1Kings 16:28,30](#)].

Omri is succeeded by his son Ahab. Omri had been the most corrupt ruler up to that time, but his son Ahab exceeded him in evil.

And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him [[1Kings 16:31](#)].

Ahab was evil, and he had a wife that helped him with his evil ways. She was a real helpmeet in the area of evil. What Ahab didn't think of, Jezebel did. What she didn't think of nobody else could -- she was a mean woman. The combination of Ahab and Jezebel was the worst possible. You can be sure that Mr. and Mrs. Haman were bad. Herod and Herodias were evil enough. And we know of Ptolemy Dionysius and Cleopatra -- they were quite a couple. Philip I of Spain and Bloody Mary also did pretty well together. These are four of the most infamous couples in history. In particular there were also several couples where the wife was dominant in diabolical designs. For example, there was Catherine de'Medici and Henry II of France; Lucrezia Borgia (she was the daughter of a pope) and Alfonso; Macbeth and Lady Macbeth; Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette of France; and finally, coming down to our day, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. All of these are couples who stand out on the pages of history as being evil, but none can exceed Ahab and Jezebel -- they head the list.

For he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, according to all that his father had done [[1Kings 22:51-53](#)].

Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, began to reign over Israel in Samaria. He reigned for two years and followed in the footsteps of Ahab and Jezebel.

Bibliography

(For Bibliography to 1 Kings, see Bibliography at the end of 2 Kings.)